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ABSTRACT

Information is provided to document the need and possible uses for a community center at the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC). The paper describes a community center as a multi-purpose facility planned and administered cooperatively by the college and community to provide recreational and educational services for the constituencies the college serves. After making an argument for the appropriateness of such a center at CCAC, the paper identifies institutions supporting outreach through facilities open to the community and the benefits and characteristics of these facilities. Next, a survey conducted at the 32nd National Conference of the American Association of Higher Education Marketplace is described. The paper indicates that the 1977 study sought to obtain input on the underlying needs for services, programs, and facilities which might be provided by a community center. Responses from 168 educators indicated that the most needed facilities were community meeting rooms, classrooms, centers for information and referral services, and library and physical activity facilities; and that counseling services, personal enrichment programs, classes, workshops, and vocational courses were the most appropriate programs and services. The paper then describes a second survey conducted to determine the needs of residents of CCAC's service area, noting that responses from 1,700 residents revealed needs including facilities for physical activities, cultural enrichment programs, and counseling services. The questionnaires are appended. (HB)

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COMMUNITY SERVICE THROUGH A
COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMMUNITY CENTER

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South Campus

West Mifflin, PA.

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COMMUNITY SERVICE THROUGH A COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COMMUNITY CENTER

Introduction and Need

Community colleges, as the name suggests, are to be responsive to the needs of people living in the community.¹ Community services are one of the dimensions of the community college that can most effectively and efficiently respond to these needs. Community services provide flexible delivery of services and programs, interaction and outreach with other organizations, agencies, industries, and schools; and flexible programming for specific target groups. The Community Center, a facility planned cooperatively with the community would be a major component for interaction and cooperation through educational and recreational services.

The Community College of Allegheny County, South Campus, presently does not have a physical education/recreational facility or a large meeting area for community groups. This missing facility permits a wide gap in the health of persons attending the community college and does not permit a community neighbor, the campus, the opportunity for programming needed educational, recreational, and social programs for the community we serve.

The cooperative use of facilities is not new. In 1971 there were 1,920 community schools.² Add to this, the recent development of the National

¹Charles R. Monroe, Profile of the Community College (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972), p. 29.

²Jack Minzey, "Community Education: An Amalgam of Many Views," Phi Delta Kappan, November, 1972.

Community School Education Association, the approval of state organizations for community education, and the interest of several foundations in promotion of the concept, and the immense size of this movement becomes apparent. The shared use of facilities endorses the need for lifetime participation in physical activities, education, recreation and the effective use of leisure time.

The Pennsylvania Secretary of Education addresses community education through an Advisory Council. The purpose of the Council is to promote, encourage, and facilitate Community Education. Our purposes in requesting a Community Center facility endorse their definition of community education. This definition is:

"A term used to describe a process in which individual persons, community groups, organizations, and local, private and governmental agencies cooperate to provide educational, recreational, cultural, social, and other related services to meet community needs through the use of educational and other facilities".¹

The Pennsylvania State Plan further states that within the Community Education concept, a public facility such as a public elementary or secondary school, a community college or public recreation center, may serve as a community center located where people live and as a site where programs and services may be coordinated among existing services providers to meet the stated needs of the community.²

¹Pennsylvania Community Education Advisory Council, Pennsylvania State Plan for the Development and Implementation of Community Education, Oct. 20, 1981, pg. 6.

²Ibid, pg. 5.

General approval exists for pleasures related to physical fitness and other forms of self-renewal. The enrollment in the Community College of Allegheny County, South Campus community services activity and enrichment classes attest to this. Ten thousand (10,000) registrants are processed each year for community services, non-credit classes offered at nineteen neighboring schools, vocational technical schools, South Campus, county parks, malls, churches and housing projects. At these locations, classes such as dance (ballet, jazz, ballroom, square dance, tap), stress management, guitar, painting, cooking (Chinese, Indian, gourmet, food processor), ceramics, personal typing etc. are selected. Present requests for weight training, physical fitness measurement, games, and general recreational programs that require full gymnasium facilities are being denied due to the lack of facilities.

Institutions Supporting Outreach Through Facilities Open To The Community

A number of higher education institutions have built facilities in the last five years for college and community use. The names of these institutions and locations are as follows: Eisenhower College, New York; Towson State University, Maryland; Vincennes University, Indiana; Nassau Community College, New York; University of Bridgeport, Connecticut; and Brooklyn College, New York. Articles written by the directors, instructors, and managers of these facilities support the increased role the facilities play in attracting new students and fostering community activities, thereby, fulfilling an important role of the college. Residents are receiving the use of the most up-to-date recreation facilities and greater enjoyment from facilities paid for by their tax dollars. In most

of the mentioned institutions, priorities for usage by the college and community were established before the facility was constructed. Also, in most of the institutions, the facility is open to the community for open recreation each day, residents pay a minimum membership fee to use the facilities, and facility use is extended to high schools, community, and government agencies.

Community Surveys, South Campus Community Center
American Association of Higher Education, 1977¹

Dr. Mary M. Norman and Dr. Margaret G. Hoffman distributed a questionnaire at the 32nd National Conference of the American Association of Higher Education Marketplace, March 27, 1977. One of the purposes of the questionnaire was "to obtain input on the underlying needs for services, programs and facilities which might be provided by a community center."² One hundred and sixty eight (168) responses were returned; seventy percent (70%) of the participants. The respondents represented 61 universities, 42 four-year colleges, 31 two-year colleges, 21 occupations other than institutions of higher education, and 13 not identified by location of employment. The results of this survey are as follows:

¹Mary M. Norman and Margaret G. Hoffman, "The Community Center Concept of Lifelong Learning," A report prepared from a survey conducted at the American Association of Higher Education, 32nd National Conference, Marketplace, Chicago, Ill., 1977 (Pennsylvania: Community College of Allegheny County, South Campus, 1977).

²Community Center - a multi-purpose facility planned and administered cooperatively by the college and community to provide recreational and educational services for the constituencies the college serves.

FACILITIES, PROGRAMS, AND SERVICES INCLUDED IN A COMMUNITY CENTER

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Percentage of Responses</u>
Community Meeting Rooms	98.7
Classrooms	97.3
Center for information and referral services	96.2
Library	91.4
Physical Activity Facilities (Basketball, volleyball, raquet sports, golf)	89.4
Auditorium	88.8
Laboratories to train para-professionals (Geriatric Care, Laboratory Assistants)	80.3
Game Room/Lounge (Recreation games such as cards, checkers, pool)	79.2
Office space for Social Agencies	79.1
Swimming Pool	72.6
Nursing Station	71.0
Dance Room	64.4
Handball/Squash Courts	51.5
Rifle/Archery Range	21.5

Other facilities written in were: Tennis Courts, Community Resource Referral Clearinghouse, and Day Care.

<u>Programs and Services</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Counseling Services (Pre-retirement, career/vocational leisure, family)	96.1
Personal Enrichment Programs and Services (Art, music, crafts, writing, theatre, and dance)	95.7
Classes/Workshops (Basic education skills, consumer education, nutrition, first aid)	92.9
Vocational Courses (Health care occupations, recreation and parks, typing, social work, photography)	88.8
Physical Activity Courses (Fitness learning/conditioning, family activities (camping, fishing, hobbies, nature programs), sports (basketball, volleyball, raquet sports, golf, handball), recreational games (pool, cards), interscholastic sports programs)	81.8

Other programs written in were Public Administration, Economics, Anything that meets the needs of people, and Depends on community wants and needs.

Community Services, 1979¹

Dr. Margaret G. Hoffman conducted a survey for community service from June, 1978 through April, 1979. For this survey, questionnaires were mailed to randomly selected residences, questionnaires were delivered to community residents by students attending South Campus, and questionnaires were delivered to persons attending community service classes. The questionnaires requested opinions for the types of physical activities, cultural enrichment activities, counseling services and classes/workshops which the community residents would participate in. Approximately one thousand seven hundred (1,700) responses were received from this survey. We now know, with some degree of support, the types of activities and services supported and/or not supported by the South Campus community. We also have an indication of the types of facilities which a Community Center could include to meet the supported activities and services, the community services supported by four age groups (17-25, 26-35, 36-54, and 55 and over), and the types of activities and services supported in the twenty-six individual zip code areas served by South Campus.

To highlight some of the results, physical activities which were supported by over forty percent of the survey participants in Southern Allegheny County, were swimming, tennis, and fitness training/conditioning.

¹Margaret Gross Hoffman, A Comparison of Three Survey Methods For Obtaining Community Input For Community Services (University of Pittsburgh, 1980).

The age group, 17-25, had the highest percentage of support for physical activities with swimming receiving 71% of support; tennis, 66%; bicycling, 61%; raquetball and fitness training/conditioning, 58%. As the age of the participants increased, the percentage of support for the above physical activities decreased.

Over 50% of the participants in the survey who were over the age of thirty-six supported cultural enrichment activities such as music, art, theatre and library services. These activities were supported by approximately 42% of the 17-25 age group, and 39% of the 26-35 age group.

The types of classes and workshops supported by the community came as no surprise. The order of preference for these classes were arts and crafts, creative domestics (crewel, gourmet cooking, dress-making, needlepoint), skilled crafts (cabinet making, upholstery, motorcycle and auto repairs), consumer education (budgeting, consumer protection, investments), horticulture/landscaping, camping, and collection/hobby interests.

Counseling services, as a community service, were generally not supported by the survey participants. Forty-seven percent of the residents supported health counseling and 39% supported career/vocational counseling. When the data was interpreted by age groups, though, 51% of the 17-25 age group supported career/vocational counseling and 59% of the over 55 age group supported health counseling.

In some communities, particular activities and services were supported by over sixty percent of the survey participants. Examples of this were skilled crafts supported by six communities; arts and crafts in five communities, and swimming in ten communities. Creative domestics, dance and tennis were also supported by over sixty percent of the respondents in three communities.

A space was provided on the questionnaire at the end of each category for write-in responses. The write-in activities most often mentioned were rifle shooting, yoga, disco, Bible/religious studies, and counseling services pertaining to marriage and family life.

Conclusion

Community use of college facilities is a community service which cannot be overlooked. Encouraging the use of the sports and recreational facilities is one way to encourage the community to use the college facilities. It has been said that the measure of success of the community college is the extent to which the community makes full use of its facilities.¹

¹Erwin L. Harlacher, The Community Dimension of the Community College (New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1969), p.3.

QUESTIONNAIRES

A.A.H.E. MARKET PLACE
SOUTH CAMPUS COMMUNITY CENTER

Dear A.A.H.E. Participant:

South Campus of the Community College of Allegheny County is proposing a plan for a Community Center. This center will be planned and operated cooperatively by the college and the community, will be located at South Campus, will support lifelong learning, and will serve the needs of the South Campus constituencies through operation twenty-four hours a day.

Definition: Community Center

A multi-purpose facility planned and administered cooperatively by the college and the community to provide recreational and additional educational services for the constituencies the college serves.

MARKETPLACE PROJECT:

The facilities and services provided by a Community Center vary for different communities. Our project is twofold: (1) to obtain input on the underlying needs for services, programs, and facilities for Community Centers, and (2) to develop a survey instrument which could then be used by different institutions and communities for designing a local, useful, and appropriate data base.

Would you please assist us during the planning phase of the project by filling out the attached questionnaire.

American Association of Higher Education Marketplace, Questionnaire, 1977

QUESTIONNAIRE

COLLEGE: _____ ADDRESS: _____

- Has your institution planned a Community Center? ____ Yes ____ No. If yes, please give the name and address of the contact person.
- Do you know of any educational institutions other than your own that are planning Community Centers? ____ Yes ____ No. If yes, please give the name and address of the institutions.
- Have you used community agencies and constituencies in preplanning? ____ Yes ____ No. If yes how did you involve them.

Do you feel that the cooperative effort was useful? ____ Yes ____ No.
- Have you developed a needs assessment instrument for your Community? ____ Yes ____ No. If the needs assessment is obtainable, please give name and address for obtaining the assessment.
- In your opinion how does community-school cooperation give impetus to lifelong learning?
- Which external funding agencies do you feel should be contacted for possible funding for: (a) the preplanning phase _____
(b) the final development stage _____

7. Listed below are facilities commonly included in a Community Center. Please circle the letter which best suits your response.

	Essential a	Important b	Desirable c	Not Essential d	No Need e		Essential a	Important b	Desirable c	Not Essential d	No Need e	
Physical Activity Facilities (basketball, volleyball, racquet sports, golf)	a	b	c	d	e	(1)	Environmental Courses	a	b	c	d	e
Laboratories to train para-professionals (Geriatric Care, Laboratory Assistants)	a	b	c	d	e		Others (Please Specify)	a	b	c	d	e
Dance Rooms	a	b	c	d	e		Basic education skills (reading, writing, computation)	a	b	c	d	e
Classrooms	a	b	c	d	e		Consumer Education	a	b	c	d	e
Community Meeting Rooms	a	b	c	d	e	(5)	II. Physical Activity Courses					
Office Space for Social Agencies	a	b	c	d	e		Sports (Basketball, Volleyball, Racquet Sports, Golf, Handball)	a	b	c	d	e
Library	a	b	c	d	e		Recreational Games (Pool, Cards)	a	b	c	d	e
Swimming Pool	a	b	c	d	e		Fitness Learning/Conditioning Courses	a	b	c	d	e
Nursing Station	a	b	c	d	e		Family Activities (i.e. Camping, Fishing Hobbies, Nature Programs)	a	b	c	d	e
Center for information and referral services	a	b	c	d	e	(10)	Intercollegiate Sports Program	a	b	c	d	e
Rifle/Archery Range	a	b	c	d	e		Others: (Please Specify)					
Handball, Squash Court	a	b	c	d	e		III. Personal Enrichment					
Game Room/Lounge (recreation games such as cards, checkers, pool)	a	b	c	d	e		Music	a	b	c	d	e
Auditorium	a	b	c	d	e		Arts	a	b	c	d	e
Others (Please Specify)							Crafts	a	b	c	d	e
							Writing	a	b	c	d	e
							Theatre	a	b	c	d	e
							Dance	a	b	c	d	e
							Others:					
							IV. Counseling					
							Pre-retirement	a	b	c	d	e
							Liaison	a	b	c	d	e
							Health	a	b	c	d	e
							Career/Vocational	a	b	c	d	e
							Family	a	b	c	d	e
							Others: (Please specify)					
							V. Classes/Workshops					
							First-Aid	a	b	c	d	e
							Nutrition	a	b	c	d	e

8. Assuming that the Community Center included the Physical Facilities necessary, which programs and services do you feel should be included in the Community Center. Please circle the letter which best suits your response.

I. Vocational Courses

- Health Care Occupations a b c d e (15)
- Photography a b c d e
- Recreation and Parks a b c d e
- Typing a b c d e
- Social Work Occupations a b c d e

IV. Counseling

- Pre-retirement a b c d e
- Liaison a b c d e
- Health a b c d e
- Career/Vocational a b c d e (35)
- Family a b c d e
- Others: (Please specify)
- V. Classes/Workshops
- First-Aid a b c d e
- Nutrition a b c d e

9. Please Circle the letter to denote the priority you feel each group should receive in the planning for a Community Center. The listed group name pertains primary characteristic of the group.

- Handicapped a b c d e
- Children - Pre-School a b c d e
- Children-School Age a b c d e
- Student 17-25 a b c d e (45)

- (25) Adults 25-55 a b c d e
- Senior Citizens 55 and over a b c d e

- Athletic Teams a b c d e
- Minorities a b c d e

- Shiftworkers (Occupation requires working hours) a b c d e (50)
- Housewives a b c d e

Others (Please Specify)

Please make additional comments which you feel would be helpful on the back of this questionnaire

____ Check here to request a copy of the data received from this "Marketplace."

Please be sure to print your name.

Community Services Questionnaire,
1979

QUESTIONNAIRE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY
SOUTH CAMPUS
1780 CLAIRTON ROAD
WEST MIFFLIN, PA 15122

RB
CS

Dear Resident:

We at the Community College of Allegheny County, South Campus, are requesting your opinions for activities and services which you feel the Community Services division of the campus should be providing. Your opinions will be used for planning a Community Center as well as for a study being done by Margaret G. Hoffman.

Definition: COMMUNITY CENTER. A multipurpose facility planned cooperatively by the college and the community to provide physical, cultural, and educational courses and activities for persons of all ages.

This Center will be for the total community: not just for college students. Please take the time to complete this questionnaire and return it to us.

ZIP CODE: _____

Please Check ☐ one

AGE: ☐ 17 - 25 ☐ 26 - 35

☐ 36 - 54 ☐ 55 and over

NAME: _____

(need not sign)

☐ Received and returned this questionnaire.

☐ Choose not to participate in this survey.

My M. Jones College Vice President
Margaret G. Hoffman Project Director

Assuming that the Community Center included the Physical Facilities necessary, which activities would you participate in? Please CIRCLE the number which best suits your response. (Answer Every Question)

A. PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

	Absolutely Yes	Probably	Maybe	Absolutely Not
Basketball	1	2	3	4
Volleyball	1	2	3	4
Bowling	1	2	3	4
Weight Training	1	2	3	4
Fitness Training/Conditioning (5)	1	2	3	4
Dance (Ballroom, Social, Tap, Jazz, Modern)	1	2	3	4
Golf	1	2	3	4
Tennis	1	2	3	4
Swimming	1	2	3	4
Roller Skating (10)	1	2	3	4
Archery	1	2	3	4
Racquetball	1	2	3	4
Squash	1	2	3	4
Jogging	1	2	3	4
Bicycling (15)	1	2	3	4

Others: (Please Specify) _____

B. CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

Music	1	2	3	4
Art	1	2	3	4
Theatre	1	2	3	4
Library Services	1	2	3	4
Community/World Affairs (20)	1	2	3	4
Ethnic Appreciation	1	2	3	4
Film Series	1	2	3	4
Lecture Series	1	2	3	4
Booktalks	1	2	3	4

Others: (Please Specify) _____

C. COUNSELING

	Absolutely Yes	Probably	Maybe	Absolutely Not
Pre-retirement (25)	1	2	3	4
Leisure	1	2	3	4
Health	1	2	3	4
Career/Vocational	1	2	3	4
Single Parent	1	2	3	4
Family Planning (30)	1	2	3	4

Others (Please Specify) _____

D. CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

Boating	1	2	3	4
Firearm (Hunting/Safety)	1	2	3	4
Camping	1	2	3	4
Fishing	1	2	3	4
Music Lessons (Voice, Instrument) (35)	1	2	3	4
Collection/Hobby Interests	1	2	3	4
Skilled Crafts (Cabinet making, Upholstery, Motorcycle and Auto Repairs)	1	2	3	4
Horticulture/Landscaping	1	2	3	4
Creative Domestics (Crewel, Gourmet Cooking, Dressmaking, Needlepoint)	1	2	3	4
Arts and Crafts (40)	1	2	3	4
Consumer Education (Budgeting, Consumer Protection, Investments)	1	2	3	4
Clerical Skills	1	2	3	4
Agency Services	1	2	3	4
Card and Board Games	1	2	3	4
Basic Education Classes (45) (Reading, Writing, Math)	1	2	3	4

Others: (Please Specify) _____

The results will be published in the Community Service Leader. If you prefer to have the results mailed to you, please print your name and address on a self-addressed stamped envelope and send it to us.

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